

Message Text

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ACTION AGRE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5251

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DEPT PASS TO USDA, APHIS, VS, FOR NORVAN MEYER

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EAGR, EPAP, TBIO, PN

SUBJECT: VESICULAR DISEASE LABORATORY IN PANAMA

1. DURING THE 25TH MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL REGIONAL COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH (CIRSA) HELD IN GUATEMALA DURING DECEMBER 12-15, 1977, RESOLUTION #13 WAS APPROVED. (THE COMMITTEE COMPRISES MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES, MEXICO AND PANAMA.) THIS RESOLUTION ASKED THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA TO LOOK FOR ALTERNATIVES TO THE PAN-AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION'S (PAHO) PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A VESICULAR DISEASE LABORATORY IN THE CANAL ZONE. THE PANAMANIAN MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, RUBEN DARIO PAREDES, DECIDED TO CONSTRUCT A LABORATORY NEAR TOCUMEN AIRPORT IN PANAMA FOR THE USE OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND PANAMA FOR THE DIAGNOSIS OF VESICULAR DISEASES. THE SCHEDULE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE LABORATORY, WHICH IS TO BE ADMINISTERED BY MIDA, IS: BEGIN CONSTRUCTION ON MARCH 30, 1978; COMPLETION EXPECTED ON JULY 15, 1978.

2. IN A LETTER DATED JANUARY 10 ADDRESSED TO DR. TED REA, LOCAL USDA REP AND CO-DIRECTOR OF THE US-PANAMA AFTOSA COMMISSION, THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (MIDA) EXPLAINS ITS DECISION AND HOPES THAT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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AND OTHER INTERESTED AGENCIES WILL COOPERATE IN THE FINANCING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THIS PROJECT. PAREDES CONSIDERED THE FOLLOWING POINTS IN HIS DECISION: NEW LABORATORY WOULD BE A PERMANENT FACILITY WHILE THE PAHO-SPONSORED FACILITY WOULD HAVE BEEN LIMITED TO A FOUR-YEAR TERM. THE COST TO THE GOP FOR THE NEW CONSTRUCTION IS APPROXIMATELY THE SAME AS ITS

COST FOR THE PROPOSED PAHO LABORATORY. THE REFURBISHING AND
RESTRUCTURING CHANGES IN THE OLD MIDDLE-AMERICAN RESEARCH UNIT
(MARU) LABORATORY IN THE CANAL ZONE WOULD RESULT IN A GREATER
DELAY THAN THE PROPOSED NEW LABORATORY. THE LOCATION OF THE
NEWLY-PROPOSED LABORATORY NEAR TOCUMEN AIRPORT WILL RESULT IN
GREATER SECURITY THAN THE ONE IN THE CANAL ZONE. FULL TEXT
OF THE RESOLUTION AND LETTER WILL FOLLOW.

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